

Message Text

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14

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13

DHA-02 /082 W

----- 009171

R 221340Z SEP 76

FM AMCONSUL ASMARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4144

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

INFO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON

COMNAVTELCOM WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN

COMIDEASTFOR

NAVCOMMUNIT ASMARA

NAVCOMMSTA NEA MAKRI

CNO WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASMARA 0741

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT ET

SUBJECT: PRISONERS AMNESTIED AS PART OF REVOLUTION DAY CEREMONIES

REF: ASMARA 0721 (DTG 141345Z SEP 76)

1. THE ETHIOPIAN HERALD REPORT OF SEPTEMBER 14 ANNOUNCING THE GRANT OF AMNESTY TO 35 PRISONERS IN ASMARA BY CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR FIKRU DESERVES SOME COMMENT. THE EPMG OBVIOUSLY INTENDED THAT THE RANDOM RELEASE OF PRISONERS BE INTERPRETED AS AT LEAST PARTIALLY RESPONSIVE TO POINT SEVEN OF ITS NINE POINT DECLARATION OF MAY, 1976. IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING, HOWEVER, THAT VIRTUALLY ALL THE 35 PRISONERS WHO WERE AMNESTIED IN ASMARA HAD BEEN HELD ON UNPROVED OR FRAUDULENT CHARGES.

2. AS AN EXAMPLE, ONE OF THOSE RELEASED WAS THE MANAGER OF A BRANCH
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OFFICE OF THE ADDIS BANK IN ASMARA, WHO HAD BEEN ARRESTED

IN EARLY 1976 AS THE RESULT OF A DENUNCIATION BY A DISGRUNTLED EMPLOYEE. DURING HIS INCARCERATION, THE AUTHORITIES MADE STRENUOUS EFFORTS TO PROVE HIS INVOLVEMENT WITH THE INSURGENTS, BUT WITHOUT SUCCESS. THE EPMG OFFICIALS FINALLY ABANDONED THEIR EFFORTS, BUT THE VICTIM LINGERED IN PRISON. THEN THE AMNESTY WAS DECIDED ON, HE WAS A PRIME CANDIDATE FOR RELEASE.

3. IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY DISCERNABLE TIES TO THE INSURGENTS, HIS RELEASE, AND THAT OF OTHERS LIKE HIM, IS NOT LIKELY TO CONVINCE THE INSURGENT LEADERSHIP OF THE SINCERETY OF THE EPMG IN FULFILLING THE NINE-POINT DECLARATION.
SLUTZ

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Message Attributes

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